AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) Using a local anesthetic or a mixture of several local ~~aneshetics~~ anesthetics in preparing an agent treating joint pains, wherein ~~characterized in that~~

(A) the ~~The~~ local anesthetic or the mixture of local ~~aneshetics~~anesthetics is dissolved in a bio-compatible solvent, and

(B) ~~The~~ the local anesthetic is selected from a ~~that~~ group ~~which~~ that is toxic to axons and ~~the~~ nociceptive nerve endings.

2. (Currently Amended) Application as defined in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the local anesthetic is predominantly toxic to pain-conducting (nociceptive) nerve fibers.

3. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~either of claims 1and 2, characterized in that~~claim 1, wherein the local anesthetic is less neurotoxic to motor and propioceptive nerve fibers than to sensitive nerve fibers.,

4. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 1~~

~~through 3, characterized in that~~claim 1, wherein the local anesthetic is used at a concentration larger than 4 %.

5. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the local anesthetic is used jointly with an acidic additive lowering the pH value.

6. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the additive is a bisulfite.

7. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in claim 6, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the additive is ~~a bisulfite, preferably~~ sodium bisulfite ($NaHSO_3$).

8. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 7, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein the additive is used at a concentration of at least 1 % by weight~~, preferably at least 2 % by wt~~.

9. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 8, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein the pH-lowering additive lowers the agent pH to less than 3.5~~, preferably to less than 3.2~~.

10. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 9, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is an amide.

11. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 10, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is lidocaine~~, preferably~~ at a concentration larger than 6 %.

12. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 10, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is prilocaine~~, preferably~~ at a concentration larger than 3 %.

13. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 10, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is mepivacaine~~, preferably~~ at a concentration larger than 5 %.

14. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 10, characterized in that~~claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is bupivacaine~~, preferably~~ at a concentration larger than 1.5 %.

15. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 10, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is levobupivacaine~~, preferably~~ at a concentration larger than 5 %.

16. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 10, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is ropivacaine~~, preferably~~ at a concentration larger than 2 %.

17. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 10, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is etidocaine~~, preferably~~ at a concentration larger than 2 %.

18. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 10, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein the local anesthetics procaine~~, preferably~~ at a concentration larger than 3 %.

19. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 10, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is chloroprocaine~~, preferably~~ at a concentration larger than 3 %.

20. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 10, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is tetracaine or a substituted tetracaine, preferably N-butyl-tetracaine.

21. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in claim 20, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the local anesthetic is used at a concentration larger than 4 %~~, preferably larger than 6 %~~.

22. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in claim 21, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the local anesthetics used at a concentration larger than ~~6 %, preferably larger than~~ 8 %.

23. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 22, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein a mixture of at least two different local anesthetics is used~~, preferably jointly~~together with a bisulfite or other pH-lowering substances.

24. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in claim 23, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein a mixture of at least three ~~three or four~~ local ~~aneshetics~~anesthetics is used.

25. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~either of claims 23 and 24, characterized in that~~ claim 23, wherein a mixture of tetracaine and bupivacaine is used.

26. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 25, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein the local anesthetic is used in pure, enantiomeric form.

27. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 1 through 26, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the neurotoxic substances belong to the following group: bisulfites, preferably alkali bisulfites.

28. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 5 through 27, characterized in that~~ claim 5, wherein a phenol or a phenol derivative inclusive analogues and their pharmacologically acceptable salts are used in

addition to the local anesthetic.

29. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the phenol derivatives belong to the group of cresols, in particular ortho-, meta- and para-cresols and their derivatives.

30. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in claim 29, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the chloro-cresols comprise in particular 2-chloro-m-cresol, 3-chloro-p-cresol, 4-chloro-m-cresol, 3-chloro-o-cresol, 6-chloro-o-cresol, 2-chloro-p-cresol, 5-chloro-o-cresol, 6-chloro-m-cresol and 4-chloro-o-cresol.

31. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the phenol derivatives belong to the group of eugenols and their derivatives.

32. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the phenol derivatives belong to the group of the thymols and their derivatives.

33. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 1 through 32, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein an x-ray contrast agent is used in addition to the neurotoxic substances and ~~preferably~~ contains gadolinium, iodine or barium.

34. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 1 through 33, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein glycerin is used ~~preferably~~ at a concentration of 10 to 95 % by wt in addition to the neurotoxic substances.

35. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 1 through 34, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein steroids are used in addition to the neurotoxic substances.

36. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 1 through 35, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein a vasoconstrictor selected from the group consisting of ~~, preferably~~ Adrenalin, noradrenaline, phenylephrine ~~or~~ and ornipressine, is used in addition to the neurotoxic substances.

37. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 1 through 36, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the neurotoxic substances are dissolved in a biocompatible solvent, preferably in glycerin, iophendylate or propyleneglycol.

38. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 1 through 37, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the neurotoxic substances are used for purposes of denerving and neurolysis in the degeneratively diseased joints.

39. (Currently Amended) Application as claimed in ~~one of claims 1 through 37, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein a permeation enhancer, preferably

dimethyl sulfoxide, is used in addition to the neurotoxic substances.

40. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method for treating joint pains, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein one local anesthetic or a mixture of several local ~~aneshetics~~ anesthetics is injected into the intra-capsular region or into the joint synovial pouch of the pain-afflicted joint, the local anesthetic or the mixture of several local anesthetics being dissolved in a bio-compatible solvent and the local anesthetic being selected from ~~that~~ the group ~~which~~ that is toxic to the axons and to the nociceptive nerve endings.

41. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ The method for treating joint pain as claimed in claim 40, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein ~~the a~~ the local anesthetic or a mixture of several local anesthetics is dissolved in a bio-compatible solvent and ~~in that~~ wherein ~~preferably~~ a liquid volume of 0.1 to 150 ml is injected into the intra-capsular region or into the joint synovial pouch of the pain-afflicted joint.

42. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ The method as claimed in ~~either of claims 40 and 41, characterized in that~~ claim 40, wherein the nociceptive nerve fibers are rendered pain-insensitive by the local anesthetic or the mixture of several local anesthetics for at least 14 days~~, preferably at least 8 weeks~~.

43. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ The method as claimed in ~~one of claims 40 through 42, characterized in that~~ claim 40, wherein the local anesthetic or the mixture of several local anesthetics is used at a concentration entailing neurolysis.